



Houston: Global Gateway City

Houston is the fourth largest city in the United States and one of the premier business centers in the world.

Houston MSA's gross product in 2008 was \$435.9 billion (The Perryman Group). Its economy is larger than that of Belgium, Malaysia, Venezuela and Sweden.

Houston's location provides significant transportation and cost advantages for companies serving markets in the U.S. and in Mexico.

Houston's cost of living is 8.8 percent below the U.S. national average, largely due to housing costs that are 21.8 percent below the average.

Houston is a major global corporate center. Its status as an international business hub is reflected in the breadth and depth of the city's international representation and consistent growth.

Houston is the Gateway to Latin America and the high-growth economies of Mexico, Brazil and Colombia, among others.

Houston's life sciences research, education and health care sector thrives in the world-famous Texas Medical Center, which houses 49 institutions including 13 hospitals, 19 academic institutions, and 15 support services organizations.

Houston is the Energy Capital now and for the future. Houston is home to more than 3,700 energy-related companies including more than 500 exploration and production firms, 400 chemical plants, 170 pipeline transportation firms and 220 companies that manufacture plastic and rubber products.

Houston's outstanding quality of life, its low costs of living and doing business, its world-class convention and meeting facilities, and the preponderance of resources and incentives can facilitate a company's entry to our market and reduce tax liability.





Houston: A Great City for International Business

The City has a variety of initiatives and economic tools which business owners can utilize in order to relocate or expand their operations in Houston. These include, but are not limited to:

- Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones
- Tax abatements
- Other tax incentive programs
- Pollution Control Property Tax Abatements
- Priority for “Green” businesses
- Statistical GIS mapping (including demographics, economic activity data, location of available buildings and land, and individualized statistics)
- The Texas Enterprise Fund.
- The Texas Emerging Technology Fund
- Foreign Trade Zones
- Tax phase-in programs
- The Texas Economic Development Act

The City of Houston has a **Pro-business** City Government committed to streamlining the business expansion process. We minimize red-tape and delays, with a visible priority for foreign companies and investors. The Mayor and her key staff are always available to resolve key issues related to major economic development opportunities in a timely fashion.

We seek to provide **Red Carpet Service** and **Introductions** provided by the professional team from the Mayors Office and the GHP; we provide personalized services via an assigned “Business Coordinator” (Liaison person), including direct contacts with decision-makers, high-level introductions, and continuing personalized services throughout the process of setting up or expanding a business in Houston.

For more questions regarding these programs and others, please feel free to call:

Helen T. Chang

Director, International Trade & Development
Mayor’s Office, City of Houston
(832) 393-0851; helen.chang@houstontx.gov

Tim Douglass

Deputy Director, Finance Department
City of Houston
(713) 837-9857
tim.douglass@houstontx.gov